|  |
| --- |
| Kangaroo Pet Food TrialOverview |

Large kangaroos such as Eastern Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) and Western Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus fuliginosus*) are relatively abundant in Victoria. While they are a valuable part of our native wildlife, in some areas they may cause problems.

**Managing kangaroos**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) issues Authorities to Control Wildlife (ATCWs) under section 28A of the *Wildlife Act 1975* for the control of kangaroos where they are damaging pasture, crops or other property or impacting on biodiversity values.

Wherever possible, DELWP advocates non-lethal management of problems with kangaroos. Some non-lethal methods must be authorised by DELWP before they can be carried out. Where non-lethal techniques are ineffective or impractical, lethal control may be necessary.

Appropriate non-lethal wildlife management options must be attempted before DELWP will issue an ATCW for lethal control.

ATCWs for lethal control are issued on a case by case basis for a specified period and for a maximum number of kangaroos. Kangaroos must be destroyed by shooting only, in accordance with the strict conditions of the ATCW, to ensure animals are destroyed in a humane manner.

Landholders who are issued with an ATCW may arrange for shooters to control wildlife on their behalf. Before now, landholders and shooters could retain the carcasses of kangaroos for personal use only.

**Kangaroo Pet Food Trial**

The vast majority of kangaroo carcasses from kangaroos controlled under an ATCW are buried or left onsite to decompose.

The aim of the Kangaroo Pet Food Trial (KPFT) is to facilitate the use of kangaroo carcasses controlled in accordance with an approved KPFT ATCW.

The trial was initially a two-year trial. However, it has been extended for another two years to March 2018 to test its sustainability over a longer period and to expand the geographic area of the trial. The trial will not change the requirement for a landholder applying for an ATCW to demonstrate that kangaroos are causing property damage*.*

Only the carcasses of kangaroos controlled under a KPFT ATCW within the trial area may be used for processing into pet food, and only by licensed pet meat processing facilities that hold wildlife processor licences.

The trial includes landholders in the following local government areas: Ararat, Benalla, Horsham, Mansfield, Mitchell, Murrindindi, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Southern Grampians, Strathbogie, Wangaratta and Yarriambiack (Figure 1). From 19 September 2016, four additional local government areas – Greater Bendigo, Glenelg, West Wimmera and Loddon – have been added to the extended trial after consultation with relevant local governments and key stakeholders.

**Use of kangaroos for pet food**

The trial focuses on the use of kangaroos controlled under a KPFT ATCW for pet food in the domestic market. The trial does not allow kangaroo meat to be used for human consumption. Kangaroo meat obtained under a KPFT ATCW can still be kept for personal consumption by landholders and shooters.

The production of pet food in Victoria is regulated under the *Meat Industry Act 1993* by PrimeSafe.

Pet meat processing facilities must meet the outcomes of the *Australian* *Standard for the Hygienic Production of Pet Meat* (‘the Standards’) and have a food safety plan (also known as a Quality Assurance Program).

The Standards apply to the processing of all animals used in the production of pet food, including wild animals. They contain minimum requirements for hygiene in harvesting, transportation, processing, identification, packaging and storage. The Standards require compliance with the *National Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and Wallabies for Commercial Purposes*, and federal and state wildlife protection legislation.

Landholders within the trial area will be required to have a Property Identification Code (PIC) to participate. The PIC is used to trace animals for pet food safety purposes and will identify which property the kangaroos came from.

Pet meat processing facilities must ensure that kangaroos are controlled by a person who has sufficient training in humane killing procedures and hygienic handling of pet food. Pet meat processing facilities must specify the professional shooters who will be supplying kangaroos (their ‘preferred suppliers’) in their food safety plan. Pet meat processing facilities are also required to obtain a wildlife processor licence issued by DELWP under the *Wildlife Act 1975*.

**Tagging and record keeping**

From the 19 September 2016, DELWP will be implementing a tagging system where all kangaroos controlled by a professional shooter under a KPFT ATCW issued after this date must be tagged with an individually numbered plastic tag. These tags will be labelled ‘Vic KPFT’ and will be issued by DELWP to the landholder. The landholder will provide tags to the professional shooters when making arrangements for control. This allows the carcasses to be traced back to the KPFT ATCW they were controlled under.

The shooter is also required to report back to the landholder on the control work undertaken, including the number of kangaroos controlled and the tag numbers used.

All kangaroos controlled under a KPFT ATCW issued prior to 19 September 2016 are also required to be tagged by the professional shooter, however the tags will be provided to the shooter by the pet meat processing facility. This is a transitionary measure, and will only be required while the DELWP tagging system is being phased in.

The tagging and record keeping process provides the landholder and DELWP with confirmation of the number of kangaroos controlled under the KPFT ATCW.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

***When will the trial run?***

The trial is running from 31 March 2014 to 31 March 2018.

***As a landholder, can I control the kangaroos myself and take them to a pet meat processing facility?***

No. Kangaroos must be controlled by a shooter who is listed in the food safety plan of a licensed pet meat processing facility.

***What if a landholder does not have a Property Identification Code?***

All landholders will need to provide a PIC on the KPFT ATCW application form. If you don’t have one please contact DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

***What if a landholder wants to control kangaroos but does not want to participate in the trial?***

Landholders who live in the trial area and wish to control kangaroos that are causing damage on their property do not have to participate in the trial. Landholders may apply for an ATCW to control kangaroos using the standard form and follow the standard process.

***Can landholders outside the trial area participate?***

No. Only kangaroos controlled in the trial area may be used for pet food*.*

***Can a pet food processing facility accept kangaroos from people who are not listed in its food safety plan?***

No. A pet food processing facility can only receive kangaroos that have been controlled in the trial area by shooters listed as preferred suppliers in its food safety plan.

***Can a pet food processing facility accept kangaroos that have been controlled on land where there is no ATCW?***

No. Only kangaroos that have been controlled under a KPFT ATCW can be processed. It is an offence against the *Wildlife Act 1975* to destroy kangaroos without an ATCW.

***How many pet meat processing facilities are participating in the trial?***

Licensed pet meat processing facilities must have a food safety plan and obtain a wildlife processor licence from DELWP before they can receive kangaroos.

As of February 2016, three pet meat processing facilities have the relevant approvals and are processing kangaroo carcasses from the trial.

For more information see the, *“Information for landholders”*, *“Information for shooters”* and *“Information for pet meat processing facilities”* factsheets on the DELWP website.

**Figure 1** Map of existing and extended trial area. From 19 September 2016, four additional local government areas have been added to the trial after local government and key stakeholder consultation.

